

Cheesy Grits Souffle

6 servings

Ingredients

1 cup grits, either old-fashioned or quick cooking (but not instant)

4 cups water

4 tablespoons butter

1 bunch scallions, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1 1/2 cups coarsely grated cheddar

1/2 cup crumbled crispy bacon

1/2 cup egg whites, from 4 eggs

Method

In a saucepan, bring 4 cups of water to a boil over high heat and stir in grits. Return to a boil and reduce heat to low, cover pan and cook, stirring occasionally, until grits are smooth and creamy, 10 to 20 minutes (depending on type of grits used). Transfer grits to a large bowl and allow to cool, stirring frequently to prevent a skin from forming.

In a skillet melt butter and saute scallions and garlic until softened and fragrant, 3 to 4 minutes.

When grits are cooled, stir in sauteed scallions and season with crushed red pepper, salt, black pepper, grated cheese and crumbled bacon. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a 9 by 13-inch heavy gratin dish or cast iron skillet and set aside.

In a large bowl beat egg whites with a pinch of salt until stiff peaks form. Gently mix 1/3 of the beaten whites into the grit mixture, then fold in remaining whites, being careful to not overmix. Transfer to prepared baking dish and bake in top of oven for 30 to 40 minutes, until risen and golden brown on top. Serve immediately.